



LCPS Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Resource Handbook for SEAC
Members and PTA/PTO
Representatives
September 2019

What is SEAC?



Primary Role: **To advise the School Board on the needs of special education students.**

Committee responsibilities per the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia (effective January 27, 2010; page 120 8VAC20-81-230-D):

- ✓ **Advise** LCPS of needs in the education of children with disabilities;
- ✓ **Review the policies and procedures** for LCPS's division of special education and related services prior to submission to the LCPS School Board;
- ✓ Participate in the development of **priorities and strategies** for meeting the needs of students with disabilities;
- ✓ Submit periodic **reports and recommendations** regarding the education of students with disabilities to the Superintendent for transmission to the School Board;
- ✓ Assist the LCPS in **interpreting plans to the community** for meeting the special needs of children with disabilities for educational services and participate in the review of LCPS's annual plan.

LCPS Staff serve as consultants to SEAC and its subcommittees. LCPS staff supports SEAC's work by providing information and updates to SEAC, assistance with meetings and communications, and other support through various LCPS offices.



SEAC Community

Includes:

- Participants (Parents & Staff)
- Representatives appointed by PTA & PTO or self-identified
- SEAC Members (21 appointed by the school board, which must include 1 Teacher)
- Executive Committee (Officers are elected from within the 21-person membership)
- Consultant/LCPS Staff Liaison (Director of Special Education)

SEAC IN ACTION

- Focus: systemic issues, not individual student/family issues.
- SEAC submits an annual report to the School Board each Fall addressing the needs of our students. (The report covers the prior school year. Past reports available at www.lcps.org/seac.)
- Goal in 2019 is to present periodic reports throughout the year and ensure SEAC representation at all School Board Meetings (typically the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month) to listen for and as necessary speak to any issues that may impact students receiving special education services.
- Needs identified through many sources:
 - Annual Parent Input Survey
 - Public Comment at SEAC Meetings
 - Input from SEAC meeting and program attendees
 - SEAC Subcommittees and Focus Groups
 - Discussions with LCPS staff
 - Information provided to SEAC officers and members
- Develop and amend annual priorities and concerns for SEAC



SEAC Priorities and Concerns Last Year (2018-2019)

Also see
Annual
Reports

2018-2019 Top Priorities:

1. Policies, Practices and Procedures

Ensure SEAC is provided with new/revised PPP's to review and provide input prior to presentation to the School Board and implementation.

2. Executive Functioning and Social-Emotional Learning

Direct instruction and support for developing social skills, mental health awareness, appropriate use of reinforcement/discipline, self-advocacy coaching, etc.

3. Specialized Programs and Services

Appropriate provision of ST, OT, AT, Music Therapy, Career/Transition Services, 2e programs, SRI, Intensive Autism and Behavior Programs.

4. Culture and Climate

Address pervasive concerns regarding transparency, trust, empowering IEP teams and communication.

5. Compliance

Issues related to appropriate IEPs, consistency across the division, and proper implementation of supports/services.

Proposed SEAC Priorities and Concerns

This Year (2019-2020)

The **2019 survey** had the largest response rate ever (N~850) over last year's (N~550), thus representing about **10% of the SPED community**, which increases the reliability/validity and generalizability of the results.

Carol and Amy (SEAC EC members) are currently drafting this year's report based on the survey and other sources of data.

Noteworthy:

- ✓ **ALL areas of satisfaction** on the survey (as measured by rating scales) for overall services and processes, specific programs, direct instruction, communication/involvement with school and from the division, and the availability/implementation of related services **significantly decreased**.
- ✓ Preliminary findings are consistent with last year's areas of concern, with the addition of several "**red flag**" needs:
 - accurate data and incident reporting
 - proper implementation of new techniques (such as Ukeru)
 - accessible instructional materials
 - utilization of appropriately trained/licensed staff
 - grade level transition facilitation
 - life/community skills preparation
 - student performance on SOL's
 - compliance with FBA's and BIP's



Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

“The basic purpose of FOIA is to ensure an informed citizenry, vital to the functioning of a democratic society, needed to check against corruption and to hold the governors accountable to the governed.”

- *United States Supreme Court in NLRB v. Robbins Tire Co., 437 U.S.214, 242 (1978)*

- Ready Access to Public Records
- Free Entry to Public Meetings
- All public records and public meetings are presumed open unless an exemption is properly invoked
- Public Meetings- the public's right to attend
- Public Records- the public's right to access
- Penalties- the public's right to enforce the law
- Meeting Notices- date, time & location 3 business days prior to the meeting
- Monthly SEAC meetings
- All subcommittee meetings
- All Executive Committee meetings

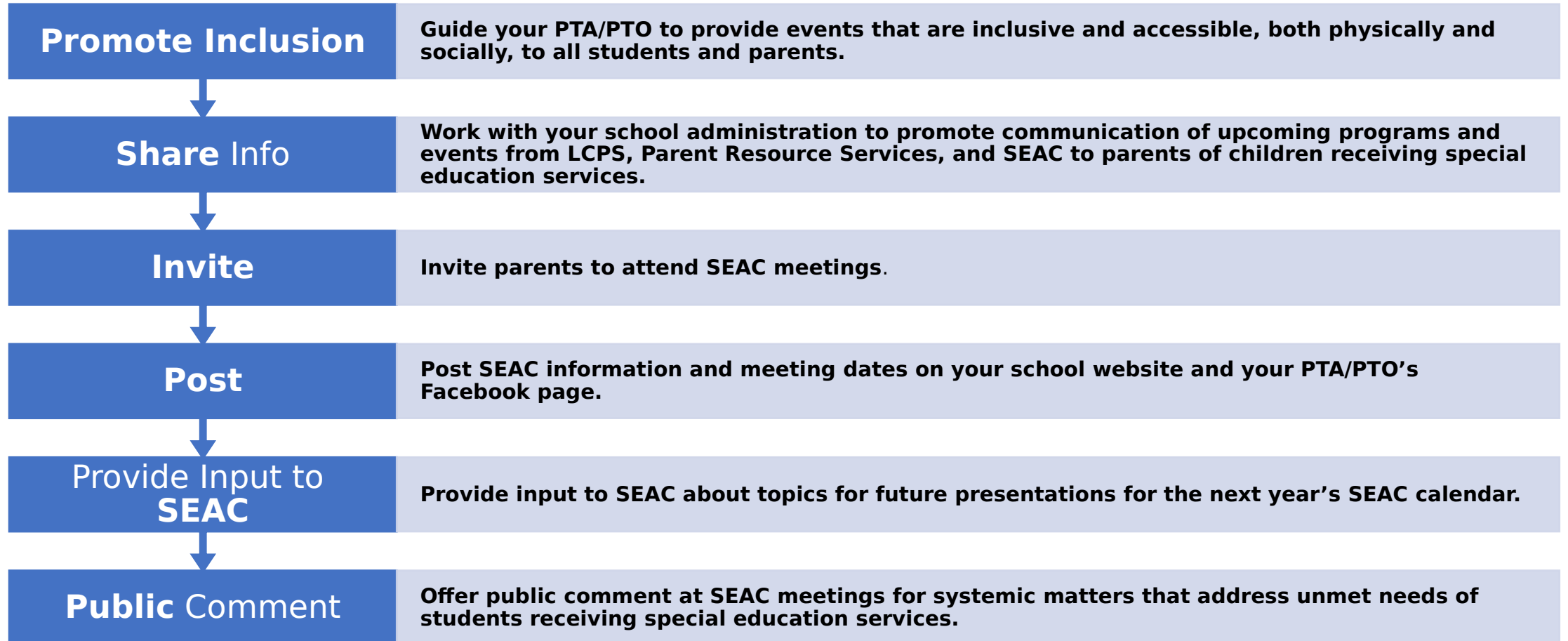


Virginia Freedom
of Information
Advisory Council

Role of SEAC Members:

Attend SEAC Meetings	Communicate with the SEAC Executive Board on needs within the special education community.
Sub Committee	Each member needs to identify a subcommittee to work on areas of identified needs.
Invite	Invite parents to attend SEAC meetings.
School Board Meetings	SEAC is working to have representation at each School Board Meeting and identified Committee Meetings
Provide Input to SEAC	Provide input to SEAC Executive Board about topics for future presentations for the next year's SEAC calendar.
Public Comment	Offer public comment at SEAC meetings for systemic matters that address unmet needs of students receiving special education services.

Role of SEAC PTA/PTO Representatives:



Engaging the Special Education Community: Build Awareness and Partnerships from the Start




- Host an **information table at Back to School Night, PTA or PTO events & Open Houses** with information about SEAC and LCPS Parent Resource Services. (Resources are available on the SEAC webpage.)
- Collaborate with administration to **identify parent training needs** for your building or cluster. Parent Resource Services is willing to come to your school and provide parent workshops on specific topics (e.g. IEP process).
- Ask your Principal to **host a “parent coffee”** to orient IEP parents on the special education structure at your school and to provide other opportunities to meet and provide overviews on topics of specific interest at your school (e.g. Assistive technology, peer mentor programs, etc.).
- For “transition years” (rising Kindergarten, rising 6th and rising 9th) ask your Principal to **host a special orientation session to focus on the unique circumstances of a student with an IEP matriculating to the next level** (ECSE to ES, ES to MS, MS to HS, HS to secondary education/adult life).

Engaging the Special Education Community: Promote Inclusion at School Events



- Work with parent organizations and administration to ensure **school events** are accessible. (Don't forget those students who struggle socially.)
- Offer a **quiet room** near the event for students who may become over-stimulated (offer alternate activity such as: video, books, coloring etc.).
- Music/Entertainment - consider students with auditory processing issues; see if volume can be lowered. Also consider students who have seizure disorders if strobe lights will be used - as this could trigger a seizure.
- Help coordinate **peer support for activities** so that students are truly a part of the activity and not on the periphery.
- Work with administration to determine if a **Sign Language interpreter** is needed at PTA, PTO or school events.



Engaging the Special Education Community: Promote and Widely Communicate Accessibility

- Use multiple strategies to **explicitly advertise the accessibility** of school events:
 - **Connect Ed** message
 - **Flyer** distributed via case manager/resource teacher
 - School & PTA/PTO/PTSO **newsletters**
 - Work with school administration and your parent organization (PTA or PTO) to ensure that their individual **websites** have links to SEAC & LCPS Parent Resource Services.
- Include a **disability statement** on all school activities, such as:

"If due to a disability you need assistance to meaningfully participate in this event, please contact XX at XX at least 5 business days before the event."

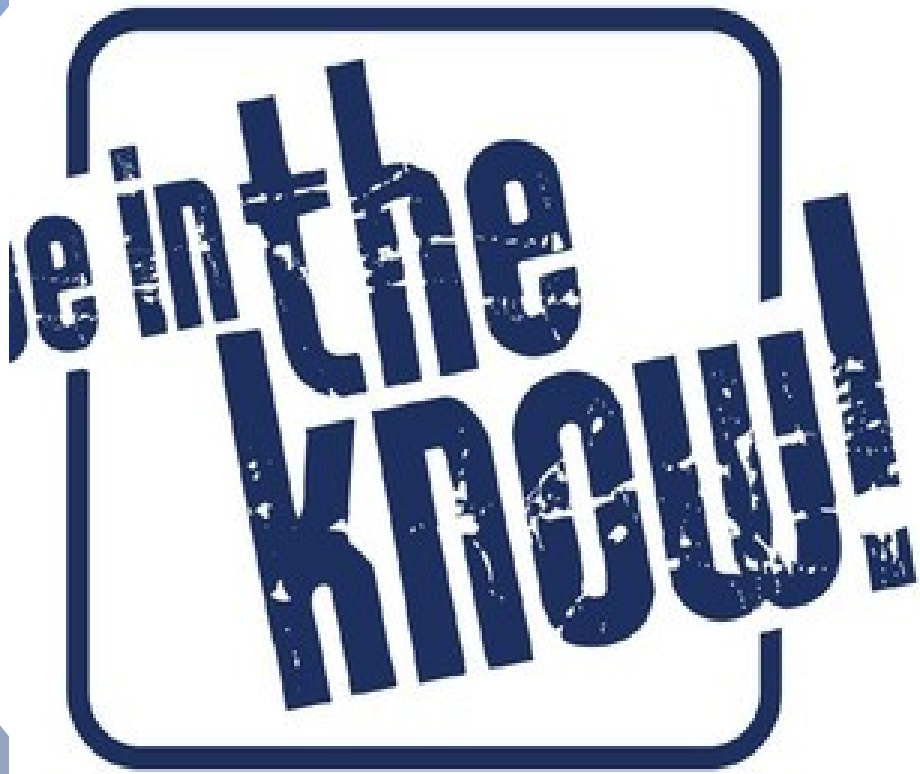
Providing Information vs. Advice

Your job is not to give advice. People may think you are an expert and that you represent the school system. Or, you may think you may have to be an expert.

***Fear not and remember:
Your role is information-
sharing only.***

If a parent or guardian approaches you for advice, please suggest that they contact





Resources

LCPS Office of Special Education

www.lcps.org

Parent Resource Services

www.lcps.org/prs

Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center

www.peatc.org

VDOE Parent's Guide To Special Education

http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/parents/parents_guide.pdf

SEAC

www.lcps.org/seac

www.facebook.com/loudounseac

2019-2020 Calendar

Business Meetings: Typically the first Wed of each month, 6-7:15 p.m., LCPS Admin.

SEAC-sponsored Programs: May occur after business meetings beginning at 7:30 p.m. and/or held on other dates in collaboration with LCPS and/or other groups.

Charge to SEAC Subcommittees: Will be determined after SEAC reviews survey findings and confirms annual priorities. Meeting schedules will be posted to the SEAC web page and may occur periodically before or after SEAC business meetings.

October is **Disabilities Awareness Month** and **Dyslexia Awareness Month**. Visit: www.interdys.org

Inclusive Schools Week, December 2-6, 2019. Theme: Charting the Course for Inclusive Schools. Visit: www.inclusiveschool.org

April is **Autism Awareness Month**. Visit: www.autism-society.org

May is **Mental Health Awareness Month**:
<https://www.nami.org/mentalhealthmonth>

SEAC Recognition of Excellence In Supporting Special Education Awards, Wednesday, May 19, 2020 (Briar Woods High School)



Thank you for volunteering!

Visit SEAC's Webpage at www.lcps.org/seac for:

- SEAC Officer Contact Information
- SEAC By-laws
- SEAC 2019-2020 Calendar
- Membership Application & Information on PTA & PTO Reps
- SEAC Annual Reports
- Resources: Flyers, Talking Points, Agendas, Minutes, Presentations, PPT's

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*"Alone we can do
so little; together
we can do so
much."*

Helen Keller